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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

City Announces Youth Programming Lineup for Hamilton County Schools' Fall Break

Series of local events will provide students a safe place to gather daily during the week-long break

Chattanooga, Tenn. (Wednesday, September 28) —The City of Chattanooga today announced a week-long series of community events designed to give students safe places to gather during Hamilton County Schools' fall break. Planned in partnership with multiple community-based organizations, the programming is free and open to all elementary, middle, and high school students as part of the city's ongoing efforts to empower young people and prevent youth violence.

"We've consistently seen upticks in violence among youth when school is out, especially during the summer but also during other long breaks throughout the school year, which is why it's so important to provide safe spaces and opportunities for kids to gather during these time periods," said Chattanooga Mayor Tim Kelly. "Youth empowerment programming is essential to helping lead vulnerable young people away from violence and toward positive, sustainable relationships and behavior, and I'm grateful to all of our community partners who came together to help make this year's fall break programming possible."

The week-long series of events kicks off on Monday, Oct. 10, and runs through Saturday, Oct. 15, with activities including movie nights, skate nights, kickball tournaments and dances. Parents and guardians may drop their students at the events with no advance registration required, with the exception of the Community Haven's Bouncy House event on Oct. 15, which requires a parent or guardian to remain onsite.



The programming lineup was developed in partnership with an extensive group of city departments and community organizations, including the city’s Office of Community Health, the Department of Community Development, Chattanooga Parks and Outdoors, the Tennessee Commission on Children and Youth, Cempa Community Care, LightHouse Collective, CADAS, Street Grace, Community Haven, and Big Brothers Big Sisters of Greater Chattanooga.

“We are committed to helping our young people build the confidence, healthy values, skills, and relationships they need for a successful future — a future where they never feel the urge to turn to violence to settle their differences,” said Chris Sands, Interim Executive Director of Community Safety and Gun Violence Prevention for the Chattanooga Office of Community Health. “Thanks to our close partnerships with the community, we are excited to be able to offer a week’s worth of community events for our youth to help build those skills and values over their Fall Break.”

“It will take our whole community working together to truly end youth violence in our city, and I’m looking forward to continued close collaborations with our partners to ensure our young people always have a safe place to gather when school is out,” said Sands.

In July, Mayor Kelly released his administration’s [Roadmap to End Gun Violence in Chattanooga](#), which includes actions to both stop the current cycle of violence on city streets and prevent it from returning in the long-term. Youth mentorship and empowerment initiatives represent one of the roadmap’s major violence prevention strategies, among many others, and the city has already taken steps to increase youth programming city-wide.

Throughout the summer, the Office of Community Health hosted weekend teen empowerment sessions at four local community centers and partnered with community organizations on the popular No Smoke Sundays gatherings in Miller Park. As part of the [One Chattanooga Relief and Recovery Plan](#), the city is also investing \$3.7 million in federal funds into nine public safety initiatives that will empower young people and help build a safer future for the community.

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